

THE PRAIRIE NEWS.

An American Newspaper, Devoted to Politics, Latest News, Literature, Morality, Temperance, Agriculture, Home Industry, &c., &c.

"LET ALL THE ENDS THOU AIMEST AT BE THY COUNTRY'S, GOD'S AND TRUTH'S."

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POETRY.

[From the Columbia (Tenn.) Mirror.]
TO NANCY.

ON HER SENDING ME, AFTER A QUARREL, A
LOVELY ROQUET AS A TOKEN OF RECONCILI-
ATION.

Amantium iras amoris reintegratio est.—TERENCE.

Exquisite Girl! when last we met,
I feared thy love had ceased to be;
That from the tablets of thy heart
Had faded every thought of me;
And that thy vows, but late so fondly breathed,
In hate had been to Lethæan hours bequeathed!

I feared another's wooing words
Had won the heart I deemed was mine—
Dislodged my image from thy breast,
And placed his own within its shrine,
And that no words of tenderness from me
Again might bring a thrill of joy to thee!

The light of love had fled thine eye,
Its smile had vanished from thy lip,
And on thy brow there was that stern,
Determined look of "let her rip!"
Which thrones itself upon the dakened brow
Of that false girl who has forgot her vow!

No wonder, then, my sensitive heart
Was made to fear some wealthier beau
Had won from thee an easy Yes,
And doomed me to an icy No!
For borne to death full many an age hath been
Since honest truth could whip its weight in tin!

But, dearest Girl! forgive the Fear
Whose dread high carnival of gloom
Filled every portal of my heart
With spectres from Hope's infant tomb!
Now faith revives, and on thy smile awaits
Joy springs to life, and doubt absquatulates!

Pence comes again with these sweet flowers,
Received this heavenly hour from thee,
And rends the fetters from my heart,
And sets its prisoned pulses free—
Hope reappears and burns with purer flame—
Love weeps no more—for thou art still the same!

May 1st, '58. SENIOR PRINTER'S DEVIL.

MISCELLANEA.

[WHITTIER FOR THE PRAIRIE NEWS.]
The Vice of Intemperance.

The civilization and refinement of the Nineteenth Century has been sung by poets, and celebrated by orators. Literature is teeming prolific with laudations of the progress of the age. Philosophy claims for itself the great advancement of man towards the goal of perfection, and asserts as unquestioned *non*, the ultimate perfectibility of the race. Science silently points to the Steam Engine, and the whole world is spell-bound at its universal adaptation to all machineries and engines, that save labor and produce comfort, supplanting brute force, and giving such wider scope to mental skill.—That we are living at an important crisis in the world's history; that there is something "new under the sun;" that this is essentially and eminently a progressive age, are as common aphorisms as "household words."

But in all this beautiful picture, like the spots on the sun's disc, can we not discern some blemishes? Blemishes marring its fair proportions, and that force themselves so disagreeably upon our apprehensions, not only by their own intrinsic deformity, but by their glaring contrast with the beauty so profusely lavished all around. In the brilliant social organization of refined christendom, is there not wanting some component, or present some extraneous substance, that presents the completeness of the whole? Does not its delicate escutcheon often present marks of defilement far less evanescent than the breathstain on glass? Is not the Crystal Goblet of public virtue as well as private affection too frequently stained with that drop that discolors in it all purity and happiness?—Amid the elegancies and accomplishments, either natural or exotic, that bloom in the paradise of social intercourse, does there not lurk a serpent, the serpent of the still, that has but to breathe near them, and the flowers lose their fragrance and decay? True it is, that by the refinement of the age many vices have been banished to dark dens of infamy; that crimes and wickedness do not so now stalk in noonday as formerly, and that around our hearthstones may not sit, "for household gods, shapes hot from Tartarus, nor all shapes and crimes;" but is there not abroad an evil spirit, almost as bad, insidiously thrusting himself into all places, wherever may be found a morbid craving for excitement,

or a sensual appetite for drink, that like the daughters of the horse-leech, will not be satisfied? The ancient Egyptians at their feasts had a skeleton to sit at the table with them, to be a reminder of the mutability and fleetingness of all things human; but in these latter days we have no need of such a monster; death is no longer grim and terrible to behold, but beams upon us with a cheerful countenance as glass jingles to glass at the bar-counter, or as bright eyes, liquid with love, dart their glances to eyes that speak again over the merry champagne, in some brilliant parlor. This indeed, is the chief danger to be apprehended from the vice of intemperance: its insidious attacks upon all that is most attractive in human nature. It can not be denied that the lower classes, the base of society's pyramid, exhibit the seething marks of its fiery visitation as lamentably as the summit and peak, the select and valuable in society; but still the same noble principles are attacked and undermined, whether in rags or ermine. This disguised demon of intoxication promises largely of happiness, while it makes of conscience a continual sting, and destroys even personal comfort. It tells the poor invalid of health and strength, while it strews his accelerated journey to a death of shame, with withered flowers and cypress garlands. It intimates to the diffident man of merit, brilliancy in conversation, while it sinks him too low to appreciate the society to which he aspired. It whispers of love, like spice laden zephyrs from the land of the blest, while it is sapping the very foundations on which the rose-red palace might have been reared in all its gloriousness. Of course, these affusions are to the first approaches of Intemperance; for after the victim is once fairly entangled in the meshes of his toil, his captor unmask, and throwing aside the glittering exterior by which he had fascinated and captivated him, exhibits with impunity to his dead fastidiousness the horrible features of open depravity.

It seems that some minds, after yielding to the temptation of the wine cup, sink low as they might have soared, had they resisted. The siren voice of Pleasure, with lute-like music, lured them on, till they were engulfed in the maelstrom of physical and social degradation. And then, over them, unburied, whitening on the beach, rolls the vast ocean of Intemperance, which, as if in penance for what it has done, sings even its sad dirge; and as if atoning for the fine flowers of feeling and talent that it has crushed and submerged, moans continually, even when calm, with its unlanguage sobbing of the surf, and when aroused, lashes itself into fury, and ungovernably howls its remorse to the elements, and dashes vain regrets to the stars. And how similar, too, to the natural ocean is this tide of Intemperance in the indiscriminate of its burials; for over all, alike, the prince and the peasant, the beggar and the noble, is said the same requiem by the winds and the waves. Such being the admitted fact, then, that intemperance obtains its sway and exercises its influence, not like other vices, not like theft, by appealing to the cupidity of man's nature, nor like murder, by hissing into poisoned ears that revenge is sweet, nor lying, that holds up contemptible meanness as admirable; but in a peculiar manner, gilding with beauty deformity itself, for man's companionship, making him believe that those are Gods, which bend nor bow to his idolatrous worship, tearing reason from his throne, making poverty assume the pretensions of wealth, and robbing modesty of its only charm, exchanging the strong man of courage into a bully, and the man of talent overflowing with the fervor of a chaste and poetic imagination, making him a sniveling idiot, and so in a thousand ways uprooting whatever is most amiable and lovely in humanity, and substituting all that is miserable and revolting. All this being true, ought not something be done by philanthropists (and who will say he is not one?) to destroy, forever, this vice?

Is there no remedy? Can the serpent not be driven from Eden? Or shall posterity suffer, as we of this age are suffering, from his baneful influence?

There is one monarch, to whom even king Alcohol pays obeisance; at whose frown, especially in republican America, all classes of society quake with fear; whose fiat, much more than any imperial ukase, are obeyed by all, as soon as heard. Can we not intercede with this powerful potentate to do battle on the side of Temperance? Should the tyrant, public opinion, decree the downfall of drunkenness, it would be a blast of ten thousand bugles in behalf of sobriety, peace, and virtue.

M. F. W.

TUSCALOOSA, ALA., 1858.

How Lord Byron Prevented Fatness.

BYRON had not damaged his body by strong drinks, but his terror of getting fat was so great that he reduced his diet to the point of absolute starvation. He was of that soft, lymphatic temperament, which is almost impossible to keep within a moderate compass, particularly as, in his case, his lameness prevented his exercise. When he added to the weight, even standing was painful; so he resolved to keep down to eleven stone, or shoot himself. He said everything he swallowed was instantly converted into tallow and deposited on his ribs. He was the only human body I ever met with who had sufficient self-restraint and resolution to resist this propensity to fatten. He did so; and at Genoa, where he was last weighed, he was ten stone and nine pounds (146 pounds), and looked much less. This was not from vanity about his personal appearance, but from a better motive; and as, like *Justice Greedy*, he was always hungry his merit was the greater. Occasionally he relaxed his vigilance, when he swelled apace. I remember one of his old friends, saying, "Byron, how well you are looking!" If he had stopped there it had been well; but when he added, "You are getting fat," Byron's brow reddened, and his eye flashed, "Do you call getting fat looking well, as if I were a hog?" and, turning to me, he muttered, "The beast, I can hardly keep my hands off him."—The man who thus offended him was the husband of the lady addressed as "Genevra," and the original of his "Zuleika," in the *Bride of Abydos*. I don't think he had much appetite for his dinner that day, or for many days, and never forgave the man who, so far from wishing to offend, intended to pay him a compliment. Byron said he tried all sorts of experiments to stay his hunger, without adding to his bulk. "I swelled," he said, "at one time, to fourteen stone (196 pounds), so I clapped the muzzle on my jaws, and, like the ill-natured animals, consumed my own fat." He would exist on biscuits and soda water for days together; then, to allay the eternal hunger gnawing at his vitals, he would make up a horrid mess of cold potatoes, rice, fish, or greens, deluged in vinegar, and gobble it up like a famished dog. On either of these unsavory dishes, with a biscuit and a glass or two of Rhine wine, he cared not how sour, he called feasting sumptuously. Upon my observing he might as well have fresh fish or vegetables, instead of stale, he laughed and answered, "I have an advantage over you: I have no palate. One thing is as good as another to me." "Nothing," I said, "disagrees with the natural man. He fasts and gorges: his brains don't bother him; but if you wish to live?" "Who wants to live?" he replied. "Not I. The Byrons are a short-lived race on both sides, father and mother. Longevity is hereditary; I am nearly at the end of my tether. I don't care a d—; it is her sting! I can't bear pain." By starving his body, Byron kept his brains clear.—No man had brighter eyes or a clearer voice; and his resolute bearing and prompt replies, when excited, gave to his body a muscular power that imposed on strangers. I never doubted, for he was indifferent to life, and prouder than Lucifer, that, if he had drawn his sword in Greece, or elsewhere, he would have thrown away the scabbard.—*Trelawney's Recollections of the Last Days of Byron.*

The following stanza chronicles rather a sad misfortune, as having happened to a fair performer in the dance at a recent grand ball at the Crystal Palace in New York:

Thus whirling in the graceful dance,
And trying every charm to enhance
She panted! and blushed! while o'er
Her cheeks ran tears! how pride was curst!
The string she had trusted to had burst—
Her moor lay on the floor!

She gathered them up, and ran as speedily as possible to the dressing room, and from there home, and for several weeks was seen no more!

The Fearful Oath; or The Count's Revenge.
BY MERCE OGNUS.
Author of "The Malignant Corsicane," "The Sanguinary Horse Apple," &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

Full many a cabbage head, both white and green,
The little farms outside the city bear;
Full many a big buck nigger's head is seen, &c.
[BEN JOHNSON.]

'Twas a glorious sunset! The sun was just following a habit which with him had almost become second nature—i. e. he was sinking in the West. I cannot exactly explain the reason, but I have ever entertained the idea that nature always wore a more serene aspect when the sun sets in the West, than when he selects some other point of the compass to hide himself from our vulgar gaze.

The Count de Mackerell sat in his room in the west wing of the Hotel de Conti, in a deep reverie and a doubtful colored shirt. The stern look of his steady eye and the convulsive twitchings of his nether lip told that fearful and malignant were the emotions then coursing through his breast.

He was aroused from his reverie by the tones of the bell in the tower of his Hotel, which was striking the hour of seven. With a hurried movement he sprang from his seat, and with rapid strides he paced the floor of his rather circumscribed apartment. There was a lofty dignity in his step, an unnatural fire in his eye, and a hole in the toe of his left boot. Oh! it was a fearful sight to see that strong man swayed by such a torrent of passion as seemed to burn with a lava like intensity in his bosom, causing his nostrils to distend and his fingers to clutch convulsively, as though he were eagerly searching for the ghost of a dime which had once occupied a place in the bottom of his leathern money-pouch!

"Yes," he exclaimed; "'tis the hour of seven! At eight, I shall have paid the alternative of five days, and will then have done full justice to the hospitality of mine host. And then"—and a most horrible expression dwelt upon his countenance—"and then—ha! ha! ha!—yes, by the blood of all the Mackerells that ever lived!!! IT SHALL BE DONE!"

CHAPTER II.

If all the pains and ills we feel
Were stamped upon our brow,
How many men would bob for ell
That fish for Mackerell now.

[GREY'S ELEGY.]

The bell had struck the hour of eight. A dim light, in a gorgeously furnished chamber in Burden's Row, flickered and flared, new up and anon down—now brightly and now dimly—waving, like a loafer's chances for a free lunch. Upon a double-back-action-spring-seat sofa—Muggins' last improvement—sat, or rather reclined, a maiden. Oh! that I had a pen formed of the gorgeous ray of of a rising sun, dipped in the beautiful and many colored prisms which so glowingly encircle an Irishman's eye, the second day after a blinding, that I might paint you a description of her beauty upon a sheet of snow and rose leaves.—The mildness of forty-three summers and a rose-pink saucer had left their impress upon her dimpled cheek; her full, dark eyes shown with a brilliancy rivaling the lustre of a peeled onion, and the silver hairs, which were few and far between, like angels visits or paying newspaper subscribers, only served to render of darker hue the jetty ringlets which playfully wandered over her classic brow.

Yet, to-night she was pensive, and seemed to be expecting some one who was not so punctual as he might be.—"Why, oh! why does he not come?—Does he think to trifle with his Angelica? If he does!" and her proud lip curled, and her lovely countenance assumed a deadly pallor, like a yam with a jaundice—"I will show him what a Mackerell can do!" She was startled by a gentle tap at the door. Hastily dissipating all traces of excitement, she flew to the door, and the next moment was in the arms of her lover—the brave Captain Le Rouge!

The gentle and loving Angelica had, long before the opening of this narrative, lost her heart to the bold Captain; and they had for some months been betrothed. His visits, however, since the death of Angelica's mother, who was the wife of the Count de Mackerell, spoken of in my opening chapter, were necessarily of a clandestine character, owing to the Count's mortal hatred of the Captain.

About a year previous to the period of which I am writing, an altercation occurred between the father and lover, growing out of a misunderstanding in relation to a little game of "draw," where-in the Count charged the brave Captain with "stocking the K'erids" on him, and thus doing him out of sundry coins of the realm, amounting, in the aggregate, to the sum of three dimes and a half, (mostly in silver.) The Captain was for-

bidden the Count's premises, and threats of the direst vengeance enunciated against him should he ever again darken the Counts door with his military presence, confirming it with a most fearful and horrible oath, the full and diabolical nature of which will be shown in the sequel!!

The lovers, thus alone, were in the highest state of earthly bliss, and like Dr. Young, "took no note on time," oblivious, even, of the approach of footsteps!!

The sanguinary Count, who, the last time we saw him, swore "it shall be done!" was upon the threshold. Three hops, one step and a straddle, brought him to the middle of the room, and there he stood, confronting the guilty Captain, in all the dignity of insulted authority, and the identical doubtful colored shirt. His daughter, the lovely Angelica, as in duty bound, immediately fainted! The silence became awful! What a calm before the devastating storm! At length, the injured father, unable longer to control his fury, drew forth a knife of huge dimensions, and brandishing the glittering weapon high o'er his gray head, rushed toward his intended victim, shrieking, in frenzied accents—

Thus far have we followed the three principal personages, heroes and shero, in this thrilling narrative. Its great length and very exciting nature, coupled with the fact that the author has sold the copyright for an incredibly large sum, renders it impossible to give more of it here. The whole narrative, with what constitutes the "frenzied accents" in the above closing paragraph, will only be found in that excellent family journal, "The Mobile Street Gazette." Address, enclosing half a candle, "Messrs. Walker & Lean, editors and proprietors, No. 222 St. Bumbleton street." For sale, also, by all periodical dealers.

[Mobile Mercury.]

Common Sense Young Ladies.—If young ladies only knew it, they would be making themselves far more attractive in the eyes of sensible persons of the other sex, by showing that they are not above work. Young men of business, despising that slavery that would continually keep the ladies at the washstand, or at the sewing-table, without amusement and relaxation at all, love to see a desire in young ladies to make themselves useful, and in selecting a wife would vastly prefer such a one. It is all a mistaken point, that ladies need be dressed in furs and silks and feathers, to win the admiration of young men. We know of half-a-dozen men who fell in love with their wives when dressed in the plainest of clothing.

At a late ball in Baltimore, a gentleman (probably one of the codfish aristocracy,) having danced with a young lady whose attractions, both personal and conversational, seemed to have made an impression on his sensibilities, asked to have the pleasure of seeing her on the following evening.

"Why, no sir," replied the fair one, "I shall be engaged to-morrow evening; but I'll tell you when you can see me."

"I shall be most happy," exclaimed the stricken swain.

"Well, on Saturday," resumed the lady, "you can see me at the foot of Marsh's market, selling cabbage!"

The gentlemen went, saw the usefulness of the lady, was still more entranced with her, and they were married shortly after.

Parson J.—Our exchanges abound just now, when news is scarce, in funny things, especially about preachers. We are in for a "good un."

Many of our readers will remember Parson J.—Well there was considerable revival at — church, and it so happened that the Parson was the most prominent preacher there. An old, thick skin toper professed conversion and joined the church. About three weeks afterwards, the flesh being willing and the spirits strong, he got drunk, and happening to meet the Parson, he remarked (our readers must do the stuttering), "well Parson, I am glad to see you, you converted me." The Parson surveyed him for an instant, and replied—"well, it looks like some of my dirty work—if the Lord had converted you, you wouldn't be making a hog of yourself to-day."

A Safe Conclusion.—The Savannah News says truly that "It is safe to conclude that a man who advertises liberally will always sell good bargains—why?—Because he sells more goods, and can consequently afford to sell for smaller profits. It is like travelling in a stage coach rather than in the cars. Some merchants make money without advertising, and so do stage coaches reach the end of their journey after a while—but what a jolly lot of time has been wasted."

The Wealth of our Statesmen.

Jefferson died comparatively poor.—Indeed, if Congress had not purchased his library, and given for it five times its value, he would with difficulty have kept the wolf from his door.

Madison saved money, and was comparatively rich. To add to his fortunes, however, or rather to those of his widow, Congress purchased his manuscript papers, and paid thirty thousand dollars for them.

James Monroe, the fifth President of the United States, died so poor that his remains found a resting place through the charity of one of the citizens.

John Quincy Adams left some hundred and fifty thousand dollars, the result of industry, prudence and inheritance. He was a man of method and economy.

Martin Van Buren is very rich.—Throughout his political life he has studiously looked out for his own interest.—It is not believed that he ever spent thirty shillings in politics. His party shook the bush, and he caught the bird.

Daniel Webster squandered some millions in his life time, the product of his profession and his political speculations. He died, leaving his property to his children, and his debts to his friends. The former sold for less than twenty thousand dollars—the latter exceeded two hundred and fifty thousand.

Henry Clay left a very handsome estate. It probably exceeded one hundred thousand dollars. He was a prudent manager, and a scrupulously honest man.

James K. Polk left about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—fifty thousand of which he saved from his Presidency of four years.

John Tyler is worth fifty thousand dollars. Before he reached the Presidency he was a bankrupt. In office, he husbanded his means, and then married a rich wife.

Zachary Taylor left one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Millard Fillmore is a wealthy man, and keeps his money in a very strong and safe box.

Ex-President Pierce saved some fifty thousand dollars from his term of service. But he had a way of his own.

John C. Calhoun left an estate worth over a hundred thousand dollars.

Mr. Buchanan is a man of wealth, and having no wife to furnish with hoop fixings, will save at least half of his salary.

Business is Business.—"Good morning, Mr. Perkins. Have you some excellent molasses?"

"No mam. Our excellent molasses are all out, but we have some fine old St. Flamingo, some New Orleans, some West Engine, and a sort of molasses which is made from maple sugar, and which we call seeryup."

"Want to know, Mr. Perkins, if this seeryup is acterly made from maple sugar?"

"I pledge you my word of honor, Mrs. Hornby, that it is acterly made from the genuine bird's-eye maple sugar."

"Then, Mr. Perkins, I shall not inter-rogatory any more, but without further circumlocution proceed to purchase half a pound of the seeryup."

"Beg pardon, Mrs. Hornby, we don't sell it by weight, but by measure."

"Oh, by measure; then I will take half a yard!"

[Evident sensation throughout the institution.]

At a party the other evening, several gentlemen contested the honor of having done the most extraordinary thing. A Reverend D. D. was appointed to be the sole judge of their respective pretensions. One produced his tailor's bill with a receipt attached to it; a buzz went through the room that this could not be outside. A second said he had returned two umbrellas which had been left at his house, to their proper owners. "The palm is his," was the universal cry; when a third observed:

"Gentlemen, I cannot boast of the feats of either of my predecessors; but here is a receipt from the Printer for all arrears and two years in advance for his paper."

"I'll hear no more," cried the judge, "this is the very ne plus ultra of honesty and unheard of deeds; it is an act of virtue of which I never knew any person capable. The prize is yours."

A clergyman was endeavoring to instruct one of his Sunday scholars on the nature of a miracle. "Now, my boy," said he, "suppose you were to see the sun rising in the middle of the night, what should you call that?" "The mune, please sur." "No, but," said the clergyman, "suppose you knew that it was not the moon, but the sun, and that you saw it actually rise in the middle of the night—what should you think?" "Please sur, I should think it was time to get up."